

Use of Public Act 88 of 1913 in Gratiot County – an understanding of why the Act should not be repealed.

Presented as testimony to the Michigan Senate Committee on Local Government and Elections, July 13, 2011

Background on Gratiot County

- Rural, sophisticated county
 - 42,000 residents in 3 cities, 3 villages, 16 townships
 - 70% of land in agricultural use
 - 4 Certified Business Parks, a 5th under construction: over 1,000 employed by 50+ small, advanced manufacturers
 - One of the most diversified counties in terms of tax base distribution (Agricultural, Industrial, Commercial, Utility, Residential)
- Collaborative history
 - Countywide economic development agency established in 1978
 - 1st Countywide Strategic Plan 1991
 - Countywide chamber of commerce established in 1994
 - Countywide master plan written by 23 units of govt. in 2008-2010
 - Countywide utility scale wind ordinance written in 2009
 - Many operational intergovernmental agreements

Why PA 88? How was it implemented?

- Economic / Community Sustainability
 - Residents identify economic development and rural quality of life as top concerns during countywide master planning effort
 - A stable, sustainable, flexible and locally controlled funding mechanism is sought, independent of revenue dips, state policy disruptions
- Equitable geographic funding burden
 - Countywide millage is best way to equally distribute funding burden across geography
 - Eliminates arguments about one area “carrying the freight”



225 E. Center Street, Ithaca, MI 48847

P 989.875.4626 F 989.875.3725

Whom it May Concern:

Gratiot County Farm Bureau is very pleased with the results of the implementation of PA88 in Gratiot County. Gratiot County Farm Bureau was well represented and informed of the purpose and direction of the funds generated by enacting PA88 in Gratiot County and we feel that these funds were used correctly by entities that directly contribute to agriculture and the economic growth of our county.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brent Skinner', written over a horizontal line.

Brent Skinner

President, Gratiot County Farm Bureau

Resolution

GRATIOT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

ITHACA, MICHIGAN 48847

A Resolution # 2010- 117

Approving a Millage of 0.339 of a Mill Pursuant to Public Act 88 of 1913 (MCLA 46.161) to Promote the Agricultural, Industrial and Tourist Advantages of Gratiot County to be Levied in December, 2010 for Use in Fiscal Year 2010/2011

Whereas, under Michigan law (Public Act 88 of 1913; MCLA 46.161), Michigan counties may levy a millage to promote economic activity in the county, region or state through several activities including advertising agricultural and industrial advantages, exhibiting products and industries, encouraging immigration and increased trade and advertising for tourists; and

Whereas, Gratiot County and Michigan are experiencing an economic downturn that has resulted in high unemployment rates, and in six years Gratiot County has lost over 2,150 jobs going from a high employment total in May, 2004 of 18,987 to today's (June, 2010) employment of 16,835 jobs which has reduced personal and family income and revenue available for general local business activity while also reducing revenues for public needs; and where there is an opportunity to provide funding for conducting economic development in the county and promoting agriculture and expanding business to improve the Gratiot County economy; and

Whereas, a levy of 0.339 mills pursuant to Public Act 88 of 1913 would provide approximately \$314,000 annually in economic development revenue and cost a homeowner \$.339 for every \$1,000 of his/her taxable value so that a \$100,000 market value home will pay no more than \$16.95 per year—approximately \$1.41 per month and this rate equates to \$10.92 per year or \$.91 per month for the average Gratiot County home; and

Whereas, the Gratiot County Board of Commissioners is considering a levy of this millage to ensure continued county wide support of economic development activities while enabling a comparable amount of general fund dollars to be redeployed to other public services; and

Whereas, it is now proposed that the Board of Commissioners approve a millage of 0.339 mills to promote agricultural, industrial, expanding business, and tourist advantages of Gratiot County; and

Whereas, it is now proposed that the 0.339 mills, which will generate approximately \$314,000, be assessed and collected in December, 2010 to fund the following programs in fiscal year 2010/2011: \$124,000 for MSU Extension/4-H and \$190,000 for Greater Gratiot Development; and

Resolution

GRATIOT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ITHACA, MICHIGAN 48847

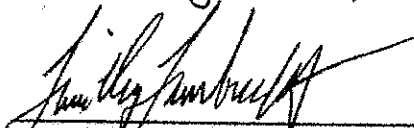
Whereas, the approval of this millage is not subject to the popular vote requirement of the Headlee Amendment to the State Constitution (Article 9, Sec. 31) because the Legislative authorization for the agriculture and economic development millage predates the Headlee Amendment by 65 years.

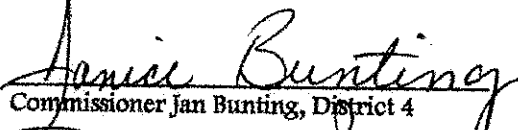
NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that pursuant to the authorization of Public Act 88 of 1913 (MCLA 46.161), the Gratiot County Board of Commissioners approves a millage of 0.339 mills to promote Agricultural, Industrial and Tourist advantages of Gratiot County to be levied against all taxable property in the County with such levy to be collected in December, 2010 for use in fiscal year 2010/2011, with the proceeds of such millage to be placed into the County's Economic Development and Agriculture Millage Fund.

Ayes: Merignas, Bunting, Dilts, Laubrecht, Knowles,
Eldridge and Gillis. (7)

Nays: None (0)


Dated: August 17, 2010


Commissioner Timothy Lambrecht, District 2


Commissioner Jan Bunting, District 4


Commissioner Patricia Gillis, District 6

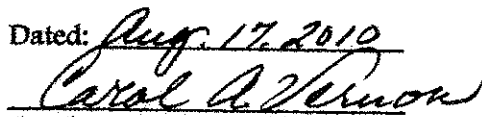

Chairman Mark Knowles, District 1


Commissioner David Eldridge, District 3


Commissioner William Dilts, District 5


Commissioner Roland Merignas, District 7

I, Carol A. Vernon, Clerk of the Gratiot County Board of Commissioners, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Gratiot County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held on August 3, 2010 and is on file in the Gratiot County Clerk's Office.

Dated: Aug. 17, 2010

Carol A. Vernon, Gratiot County Clerk

CITY OF ALMA, MICHIGAN

525 E. Superior, P. O. Box 278 Alma, MI 48801-0278

www.ci.alma.mi.us

CITY CLERK
989 463-8336

FAX
989 463-5574

Resolution of Support

Whereas, the future of the City of Alma depends on Economic and Agricultural Development; and,

Whereas, Greater Gratiot Development has been responsible for creating an atmosphere of trust where local units of government have successfully collaborated on projects such as the countywide Master Plan, the Gratiot Community Airport Authority, the countywide GIS system, the passage of the county park millage, the creation of the Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce, the creation of Gratiot Community Foundation, and the Gratiot Brownfield Authority; and,

Whereas, Greater Gratiot Development has played a major role in attracting business and industry, as well as facilitating growth in Gratiot County with businesses such as Terry Materials, Merrill Fabricators, Cartridges Are Us, AGRO Culture Liquid Fertilizers, Plasti Paint, Michigan Sugar, MAC, Alpha Plastics, and JerDen Plastics; and,

Whereas, Greater Gratiot Development has assisted many municipalities and businesses in securing financing such as Gratiot Medical Center, Alma Iron and Metal, Village of Breckenridge, and Powder Coat of Central Michigan; and,

Whereas, the agricultural economy is a major employer and backbone of our local economy; and,

Whereas, the success of many of the retail establishments in Alma depends upon the success of the agricultural sector; and,

Whereas, the City of Alma believes that the citizens of Gratiot County need to control our own future, including the short and long term job development opportunities for ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren, and;

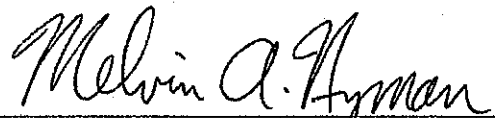
Whereas, the economic health and the rural way of life in Gratiot County have been identified as top priorities by the countywide Master Plan; and,

Whereas, Michigan Public Act 88 of 1913 allows a county Board of Commissioners to levy up to .5 mills for the purpose of economic development and agricultural promotion;

Now, Therefore Be It Resolved that the City of Alma City Commission does hereby go on record as supporting the levying of up to .5 mills for the purpose of economic development and agricultural promotion through the public funding of Greater Gratiot Development and Michigan State University Extension's 4-H program.

Be It Further Resolved that this Resolution of Support be entered into the official minutes of the Alma City Commission.

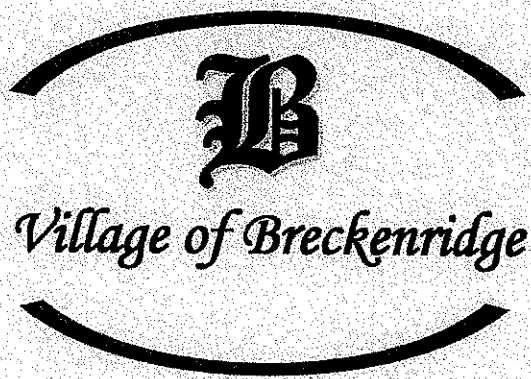
Dated this 27th day of July 2010.



Melvin A. Nyman, Mayor



Barbara A. Gager, City Clerk



RESOLUTION

At a regular meeting of the Village Council of the Village of Breckenridge, Gratiot County, Michigan, held on July 26, 2010.

The following resolution was offered by Councilperson Ostrander and seconded by Councilperson Schaub:

Whereas, the future of the Village of Breckenridge depends on Economic and Agricultural Development; and,

Whereas, Greater Gratiot Development has been responsible for creating an atmosphere of trust where local units of government have successfully collaborated on projects such as the countywide Master Plan, the Gratiot Community Airport Authority, the countywide GIS system, the passage of the county park mileage, the creation of the Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce, the creation of Gratiot Community Foundation, and the Gratiot Brownfield Authority; and,

Whereas, Greater Gratiot Development has played a major role in attracting business and industry, as well as facilitating growth to Gratiot County with businesses such as Terry Materials, Merrill Fabricators, Cartridges Are Us, AGRO Culture Liquid Fertilizers, Plasti Plint, Michigan Sugar, MAC, Apha Plastics, and JerDen Plastics; and,

Whereas, Greater Gratiot Development has assisted many municipalities and businesses in securing financing such as Gratiot Medical Center, Alma Iron and Metal, Village of Breckenridge, and Powder Coat of Central Michigan; and,

Whereas, the agricultural economy is major employer and backbone of our local economy; and,

Whereas, the Village of Breckenridge believes that the citizens of Gratiot County need to control our own future, including the short and long term job development opportunities for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren, and,

Whereas, the economic health and rural way of life in Gratiot County have been identified as top priorities by the countywide Master Plan; and,

Whereas, Michigan Public Act 88 of 1913 allows a county Board of Commissioners to levy up to .5 mills for the purpose of economic development and agricultural promotion;

Now Therefore be it resolved that the Council of the Village of Breckenridge does hereby go on record as supporting the levying of up to .5 mills for the purpose of economic development and agricultural promotion through the public funding of Greater Gratiot Development and Michigan State University Extension's 4-H program.

YEAS: Anderson, Chapin, Ostrander, Schaub, Sterling, Zimmerman, and Seeley

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Village Council of the Village of Breckenridge, Gratiot County, Michigan, at a meeting held on July 26, 2010, the original of which resolution is on file in my office. I further certify that notice of said meeting was given in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.



Bridget M. Suhr
Clerk, Village of Breckenridge

**RESOLUTION 2010-12
CITY OF ST. LOUIS
COUNTY OF GRATIOT**

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT

Minutes of a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of St. Louis, County of Gratiot, Michigan held on the 20th day of July, 2010, at 7:30 a.m.

Present: Mayor Joe Scholtz, Jerry Church, James Kelly, William Shrum

Absent: None

The following preamble and resolution was offered by Member Shrum, and supported by member Church.

Whereas, the future of the City of Saint Louis is dependent on Economic and Agricultural Development; and,

Whereas, Greater Gratiot Development has been responsible for creating an atmosphere of trust where local units of government have successfully collaborated on projects such as the countywide Master Plan, the Gratiot Community Airport Authority, the countywide GIS system, the passage of the county park millage, the creation of the Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce, the creation of Gratiot Community Foundation, and the Gratiot Brownfield Authority; and,

Whereas, Greater Gratiot Development has played a major role in attracting business and industry, as well as facilitating growth to Gratiot County with businesses such as Terry Materials, Merrill Fabricators, Cartridges Are Us, AGRO Culture Liquid Fertilizers, Plasti Paint, Michigan Sugar, MAC, Alpha Plastics, and JerDen Plastics; and,

Whereas, Greater Gratiot Development has assisted many municipalities and businesses in securing financing such as Gratiot Medical Center, Alma Iron and Metal, Village of Breckenridge, and Powder Coat of Central Michigan; and,

Whereas, the agricultural economy is major employer and backbone of our local economy; and,

Whereas, the success of many of the retail establishments in Saint Louis depend upon the success of the agricultural sector; and,

Whereas, the City of Saint Louis believes that the citizens of Gratiot County need to control our own future, including the short and long term job development opportunities for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren, and;

Whereas, the economic health and the rural way of life in Gratiot County have been identified as top priorities by the countywide Master Plan; and,

Whereas, Michigan Public Act 88 of 1913 allows a county Board of Commissioners to levy up to .5 mills for the purpose of economic development and agricultural promotion;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Saint Louis City Council does hereby go on record as supporting the levy of up to .5 mills for the purpose of economic development and agricultural promotion through the public funding of Greater Gratiot Development and Michigan State University Extension's 4-H program.

Be it further resolved that this resolution of support be entered into the official minutes of the Saint Louis City Council this 20th day of July 2010.

Ayes: Shrum, Church, Scholtz, Allen, Kelly

Nays: None

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED

I, Nancy L. Roehrs, Clerk of the City of St. Louis, certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of a resolution adopted by the City Council of the City of St. Louis at its regular meeting held Tuesday, July 20, 2010.

Date: July 20, 2010


Nancy L. Roehrs, City Clerk

Resolution 2010-27
Support for Economic & Agricultural Development Activities

WHEREAS, the future viability of the City of Ithaca depends on Economic and Agricultural Development; and,

WHEREAS, Greater Gratiot Development has been a key collaborative vehicle where local units of government have worked together on activities such as the countywide Master Plan, the Gratiot Community Airport Authority, the countywide GIS system, the creation of the Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce, the creation of Gratiot County Community Foundation, the Gratiot County Brownfield Authority, and the development of several area industrial parks; and,

WHEREAS, Greater Gratiot Development has played a major role in attracting business and industry, as well as facilitating growth to Gratiot County with businesses such as Cartridges Are Us, Barry Controls, Pioneer Hi-Bred, Aircraft Precision Products, AGRO Culture Liquid Fertilizers, Merrill Fabricators, Plasti Paint, Michigan Sugar, MAC, Alpha Plastics, JerDen Plastics and dozens more; and,

WHEREAS, Greater Gratiot Development has assisted many businesses and institutions in securing financing such as Precision Machine & Mfg, Powder Coat of Central Michigan, Gratiot Medical Center, Masonic Pathways and many others; and,

WHEREAS, the surrounding agricultural sector is a major base of relative stability for the local economy; and,

WHEREAS, the success of many of the commercial establishments in Ithaca depend upon the success of the agricultural sector; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca believes that the citizens of Gratiot County must control our own future, including the short and long term job development opportunities for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren, friends and neighbors, and;

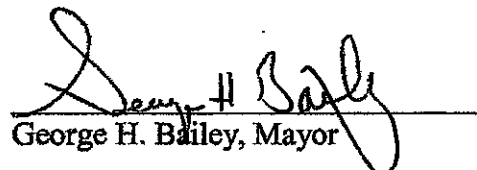
WHEREAS, the economic health and the rural way of life in Gratiot County have been identified as top priorities by the public through the countywide Master Plan survey process; and,

WHEREAS, Michigan Public Act 88 of 1913 allows a county Board of Commissioners to levy up to .5 mills for the purpose of economic development and agricultural promotion;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Ithaca City Council does hereby support the levying of up to .5 mills for the purpose of economic development and agricultural promotion through the public funding of Greater Gratiot Development and Michigan State University Extension's 4-H program or through other means possible.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution of support be entered into the official minutes of the Ithaca City Council this 3rd day of August, 2010.


Barbara Fandell, Clerk-Treasurer


George H. Bailey, Mayor



PINE RIVER TOWNSHIP HALL
1495 W MONROE RD
SAINT LOUIS, MICHIGAN 48880

www.pinerivertwp.org

PHONE: (989) 681-5523
FAX: (989) 681-4188

Whereas Pine River Township has a vested interest in both Economic Development and Agricultural Promotion, and

Whereas the township has supported these interests through direct funding of many countywide activities, including Greater Gratiot Development, the Gratiot Community Airport, the countywide GIS system, the countywide Master Plan, as well as the St. Louis and Alma Libraries, and

Whereas Pine River Township believes that we control our own future, including the short and long term job development opportunities that will be made available to our children and grandchildren, and

Whereas the agricultural heritage of Pine River Township is a huge asset to our taxpayers, and the promotion of agricultural activity is desirable, and

Whereas Michigan State Public Act 88 of 1913 allows a county Board of Commissioners to levy up to .5 mills for the purpose of economic development and agricultural promotion.

Therefore be it resolved that Pine River Township board of trustees does hereby go on record as supporting the levying of up to .5 mills for the purpose of economic development and agricultural promotion through the public funding of Greater Gratiot Development and Michigan State University Extension's 4-H program.

AYES: Beeson, Best, Moeggenborg, Rademacher
NAYS: None
ABSENT Baker

The Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

Mike Rademacher, Clerk

I hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Trustees of Pine River Township, County of Gratiot, Michigan at a Regular Meeting held on July 21, 2010.

Mike Rademacher, Clerk